



**HILARY S. FRANZ**  
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS



**DNR's mission is to manage, sustain, and protect the health and productivity of Washington's lands and waters to meet the needs of present and future generations.**

## CONTACT

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# Department of Natural Resources 2024 Legislative Priorities Summary

## CLIMATE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

### 1. Wildfire and Forest Health Resilience/HB 1168 Investments (GF-S \$24M)

Funding to meet the Legislature's \$125 million biennial commitment in the passage of HB 1168 (2021). Funding will continue the forest health and wildfire resilience work that began last biennium. These critical investments were on the ground to help mitigate the damage and cost of wildfires in 2023. Failure to receive full funding will result in significant consequences to our DNR's ability to meet the Legislature's wildfire and forest health resilience objectives found in HB 1168. Under funding disproportionately impacts fire districts, forest health contractors, and communities supported by DNR's Wildfire Ready Neighbors program because DNR will not be able to distribute grants and contracts for critical community programs, including surplus engines and grants to fire districts.

### 2. Smokey Bear License Plate - SB XXXX/HB XXXX

Legislation establishing a Smokey Bear license plate that would be available for purchase in October 2024. Revenue from Smokey Bear license plates would be devoted for wildfire prevention programs administered by DNR. This would be the agency's first license plate, the state's only license plate for wildfire prevention, and is the symbol of support for wildland fire fighters.

### 3. Drought Resilience – SB XXXX/HB XXXX (GF-S \$1.6M / Cap \$1M)

Funding and legislation for DNR-managed lands to be more resilient to drought conditions occurring across the state. Bill authorizes DNR to lease excess water on DNR trust lands so DNR can begin developing a state-wide water bank. Funding also creates a water usage monitoring and compliance program within DNR; begin implementation of a water bank program, fund water infrastructure for more efficient water systems on DNR lands, and the agency's landowner obligation for our share of the Odessa groundwater replacement project.

### 4. Post-wildfire Debris Flow (GF-S \$965k)

DNR's Cascading Impacts of Wildfire legislation (HB 1578) unanimously passed in 2023. The bill, in part, created a post-wildfire debris flow program. The agency did not receive sufficient funding to fully establish the wildfire debris flow program envisioned in the bill, and the additional funding requested will allow the agency to conduct landslide hazard data analysis and assessment, including burned area assessments, and data collection needed to develop a warning system for at-risk communities and emergency managers.

## GOOD GOVERNANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

### 1. Commercial Use Fees - SB XXXX/HB XXXX

Legislation authorizing the agency to charge a fee for permitted recreational activities being conducted on DNR-managed public lands without the agency losing its recreational immunity. Loss of recreational immunity currently prohibits the agency imposing a fee and exacerbates inequity in who can utilize DNR lands. This legislation will create parity with sister natural resource agencies that are currently allowed to charge this fee. Fees will be established through rule-making and will require final approval by the Board of Natural Resources.

### 2. Tribal Interlocal Agreements - SB XXXX/HB XXXX

Legislation authorizing the Commissioner of Public Lands to enter into agreements with federally recognized Tribes allowing Tribal police officers to enforce DNR administrative rules on DNR-managed public lands. This will expand protection of lands from illegal dumping or tree cutting and allow Tribes to assist DNR in managing violations on our public lands, including outdoor access and recreation, as we work with our Tribal partners to better protect our public lands and cultural resources.



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### **3. Recreational Target Shooting (GF-S \$1.23M / Cap \$1.8M)**

Funding to address the increasing public safety and environmental hazard challenges from recreational target shooting on DNR-managed public lands. Capital funding will allow DNR to launch two pilot programs—NE Region and Olympic Region—to address immediate concerns in these communities. Pilot sites will provide a blueprint to utilize operating funding for an outreach and designation process for other, more densely populated, areas of the state where target shooting management is highly needed.

### **4. European Green Crab Management (GF-S \$857k)**

Funding for DNR to continue managing state-owned aquatic lands against the establishment and expansion of European Green Crabs (EGC), an ecologically destructive invasive species harming DNR-managed aquatic lands in Puget Sound, Willapa Bay, and Grays Harbor. Funding supports DNR staff in monitoring EGC populations and trapping efforts to remove EGC from our waterways. To date, DNR has trapped and removed more than 10,000 EGC from Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor and needs additional funding to continue this work.

### **5. On-Going LiDAR Funding (GF-S \$780k)**

Establishing on-going funding to ensure DNR's LiDAR program has a predictable funding model to meet the demand for a predictable 10-year update LiDAR cycle. This is a critical data source needed for natural resource, habitat, forestry, and conservation projects and will be used to measure progress on key deliverables and investments across the state.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

### **1. Camp Colman (Cap \$6M)**

Funding for the Greater Seattle YMCA's Camp Colman located on Case Inlet in Pierce County. The Camp serves over 2,500 youth and families annually with a focus on providing access to outdoor spaces for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). DNR is removing a tide gate (culvert) in Whiteman Cove to restore fish passages for tribal treaty rights as required under *U.S. v Washington* (2013). Funding helps mitigate impacts to the Camp while ensuring it can continue to provide important programs to youth that come to the camp from around the state, including how to make the new estuary as the centerpiece of its environmental learning program.

## WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### **1. Housing on Public Lands - SB XXXX/HB XXXX (GF-S \$753k / Cap \$488)**

Funding and legislation to develop residential and workforce housing on DNR-managed and administrative lands. Legislation allows developers of low-to-moderate income households on DNR leased land to be eligible to defer the leasehold excise tax for a specific amount of time. Operating funding will pilot an Infrastructure Fund for necessary infrastructure, such as roads, sewer, power and water, to make the lots more ready and less costly to develop. Capital funding will allow for design and future construction of 4500 sq. ft. of seasonal employee housing at DNR's Port Angeles site integrating cross laminated timber products as a key building material.

### **2. Youth Education and Outreach Program (GF-S \$1.65M)**

Funding to launch DNR's Youth Education and Outreach Program (YEOP) to facilitate place-based, career-connected, outdoor learning experiences on state lands and cultivate the next generation of natural resource professionals. Funding will build upon on statewide momentum around outdoor education by providing resources to educators to help them teach about the complexities of natural resource management, including educator workshops; and (2) youth experiential learning opportunities on public land to explore careers in natural resources and develop the skills used by natural resource professionals.

### **3. DNR Conservation Corps (GF-S \$1.82M)**

Funding for 870 crew days in FY25 to add necessary capacity to address the 20 percent or more increase in visitation to DNR-managed lands since 2019. Work will focus on recreation management in some highest use areas, including Blanchard State Forest, the Snoqualmie Corridor, and Capital State Forest. Crews will also staff our Aquatics Invasive Species Program. Failure to receive this stopgap funding will likely result in the loss of this needed program.